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## **Budget passes, agriculture extension funding remains untouched in budget deal**

**Lansing** – Funding for the Michigan State Agriculture Extension program will remain intact next year thanks to hard work by Sen. Gerald Van Woerkom (R-Norton Shores) and his Senate Republican colleagues.

“Agriculture is an important part of our economy and history,” Van Woerkom said. “Programs run through extension offices such as 4-H are educational and get our children involved, and the experiment station provides needed research to assist farmers in fighting disease. We were not about to let these programs be reduced or eliminated.”

Due to the state budget deficit, the governor initially proposed eliminating funding for the Agriculture Experiment Station and reducing the Cooperative Extension (including Project GREEN) budget by \$5 million, an 18 percent cut.

Van Woerkom, joined by Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema (R-Wyoming) and other fellow Republicans, said “no” and fought for the agricultural program funding. With a budget agreement reached between the governor and the Legislature Wednesday, both programs will be held harmless.

“We heard from constituents about how important these programs are and how they needed our protection,” Van Woerkom said.

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